

UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

59th Session, Vienna/Online, 7-18 February 2022

Statement by Germany on

Agenda item 12: Near-Earth objects

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

As a member of the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG, pronounced "Samepage") and with representation in the International Asteroid Network (IAWN, pronounced "Eyewan"), Germany continues to recognize the **importance of research to develop and execute successful near-Earth object mitigation space missions.**

In particular we congratulate our US colleagues on the successful launch of the DART mission on 24th November 2021 to test the kinetic-impactor method of asteroid deflection.

Work in Germany continues on the Hera mission led by ESA, for which OHB, Germany, is prime contractor. Hera is a reconnaissance mission, which will rendezvous with the DART target asteroid system Didymos in 2026 to investigate the effects of the DART impact. DLR and the Natural History Museum Berlin, are involved in projects in support of Hera science, including the NEO-MAPP project funded by the European Commission. The DART and Hera missions will constitute the **first controlled test of an asteroid deflection method on a real asteroid.**

The University of Stuttgart, with support from DLR, is providing a Dust Analyzer instrument for the Japanese "Destiny+" mission to the active near-Earth object (3200) Phaethon. Destiny+, scheduled for launch in 2023/2024, will fly by Phaethon in early 2028. The German Destiny+ Dust Analyzer, will observe dust from Phaethon, the parent of the Geminid meteor shower, to help understand the mechanisms of dust ejection. The spacecraft will pass as close as 500 km to the surface of Phaethon.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

Germany continues to support the SMPAG Ad-hoc Working Group on Legal Issues, coordinated by DLR until 2018, and **feels strongly that the Working Group should continue** given the many remaining legal issues in the field of planetary defence deserve investigation and debate. The first report of the group was made available on the SMPAG website in April 2020. Two important outstanding issues are mandates for those states able and willing to carry out a deflection mission and liability considerations.

We thank you for your kind attention.